

December 15, 2009 - Contract for Geothermal Heating System at Parks Awarded

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The U.S. National Park Service has awarded a \$79,000 contract under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to H.F. Lenz Co., an architectural and engineering firm based in Johnstown.

The company will design two geothermal heating systems, one for installation at the Johnstown Flood National Memorial and a second at Fort Necessity National Battlefield, according to Joanne Hanley, superintendent of the national parks in western Pennsylvania.

"These improvements will allow the National Park Service to reduce carbon emissions while providing better service to the visitors of Johnstown Flood National Memorial and Fort Necessity National Battlefield. In addition to creating local jobs, this project supports the tourism industry that is so important to the economic vitality of this community," said Hanley.

"The tourism and recreation industry have become staples of our local economy, attracting thousands of annual visitors who explore our regions rich history and natural beauty," commented U.S. Rep. John P. Murtha (D-Johnstown). "The National Park Service does an outstanding job of maintaining these historic sites, and I'm pleased that federal stimulus funds will be used to upgrade facilities at the Johnstown Flood National Memorial and the Fort Necessity National Battlefield."

"I'm pleased to see the National Park Service has made a competitive award of federal funds to a Johnstown firm to improve two of the area's historical treasures," said Sen. Robert P. Casey Jr.

"These geothermal heating systems demonstrate the National Park Service's concern over the environmental impacts their visitor facilities have on the local community and will not only reduce carbon emissions, but also create local jobs and provide better service to Pennsylvanians who visit the sites. This award provides further evidence that the Recovery and Reinvestment Act is beginning to work in Pennsylvania."

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act passed earlier this year gave \$3 billion to the Department of the Interior. Of that amount, \$750 million in funding goes to the National Park Service.

"The ARRA funds are part of a stimulus package that is an important component of President Obama's plan to jumpstart the economy and put a down payment on addressing long-neglected challenges so the country can thrive in the 21st century," according to Casey. "Under the ARRA, Interior is making an investment in conserving America's timeless treasures - our stunning natural landscapes, our monuments to liberty, the icons of our culture and heritage - while helping American families and their communities prosper again. Interior is also focusing on renewable energy projects, the needs of American Indians, employing youth and promoting community service."

"With its investments of Recovery Act funds, the Department of the Interior and its bureaus are putting people to work today to make improvements that will benefit the environment and the region for many years to come," Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar said.

Salazar has pledged unprecedented levels of transparency and accountability in the implementation of the department's economic recovery projects. The public will be able to follow the progress of each project on www.recovery.gov and on www.interior.gov/recovery.

Salazar has appointed a senior advisor for economic recovery, Chris Henderson, and an Interior Department economic recovery task force to work closely with the Interior Department's inspector general and ensure the recovery program is meeting the high standards for accountability, responsibility and transparency set by President Obama.

